

Message Text

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TAGS: ETRD, DA, NI, IV
SUBJECT: DANISH DELEGATION'S VISIT TO NIGERIA CANCELLED

SUMMARY. A LONG-SCHEDULED VISIT OF DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER LISE OSTERGAARD AND 62 OTHERS ON TRADE MISSION TO NIGERIA WAS CANCELLED AT LAST MINUTE SEPTEMBER 2. REASON GIVEN FOR CANCELLATION WAS INABILITY OF THE NIGERIANS TO MAKE ADEQUATE PREPARATIONS TO RECEIVE SO LARGE A GROUP. DANISH OFFICIALS SUSPECT RIVALRY BETWEEN COMMISSIONER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS GARBA AND COMMISSIONER FOR TRADE SHUWA MAY ACCOUNT FOR SURPRISING NIGERIAN BEHAVIOR. END SUMMARY.

1. A GROUP OF SIXTY-THREE DANISH OFFICIALS, BUSINESSMEN AND NEWSPAPER REPORTERS, INCLUDING DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER LISE OSTERGAARD, CANCELLED A PLANNED SEPTEMBER 4 DEPARTURE FOR NIGERIA AND IVORY COAST AFTER WORD WAS RECEIVED LATE SEPTEMBER 2 THAT NIGERIANS WOULD BE UNABLE TO RECEIVE THE DELEGATION. GROUP WAS LARGEST DANES HAD EVER ASSEMBLED FOR SUCH A VISIT AND DANISH DISAPPOINTMENT WAS OBVIOUS. A MUCH SMALLER DELEGATION WILL TRAVEL TO ABIDJAN SEPTEMBER 7.

2. ACCORDING TO A FOREIGN OFFICE SOURCE, OSTERGAARD
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HAD RECEIVED INTIMATIONS FROM GARBA DURING THE ANTI-APARTHEID CONFERENCE IN LAGOS THAT THE NIGERIANS WERE HAVING SOME DIFFICULTY IN ORGANIZING A PROGRAM FOR THE LARGE DANISH GROUP. OSTERGAARD TOLD GARBA THAT HER GOVERNMENT PLACED GREAT IMPORTANCE ON MAKING THE TRIP AS SCHEDULED AND TWO DAYS LATER SHE RECEIVED NIGERIAN CONFIRMATION THAT THE TRIP COULD GO OFF AS PLANNED. CONSEQUENTLY, THE DISAPPOINTMENT WAS GREAT WHEN AT THE LAST MOMENT THE NIGERIANS

INFORMED THE DANISH GOVERNMENT THAT THE TRIP WOULD HAVE TO BE CANCELLED. A NIGERIAN INVITATION TO COME LATER IN THE MONTH WAS SMALL CONSOLATION, BUT THE DANES HOPE THAT THE TRADE MISSION WILL BE ABLE TO GO TO NIGERIA SOME TIME LATER THIS YEAR.

3. THE DANES HAVE NOT YET HAD A FULL REPORT FROM THEIR AMBASSADOR IN LAGOS, BUT THEY FEEL THAT A COMPETENCE RIVALRY BETWEEN GARBA AND SHUWA MAY HAVE CAUSED THE CANCELLATION. GARBA HAD ORIGINALLY BEEN FORESEEN AS HOST TO THE DELEGATION, BUT THIS RESPONSIBILITY WAS LATER TRANSFERRED TO SHUWA. A DANISH BUSINESSMAN WORKING IN NIGERIA AND PRESENTLY HERE ON HOLIDAY TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER ANOTHER REASON MIGHT BE NIGERIAN RELUCTANCE TO RECEIVE THE DANISH JOURNALISTS ALONG WITH THE DANISH TRADE REPRESENTATIVES.
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